



The Bridge

MAY 2024



From the Pastor

Rev. Julie Sterling

What happens next

The empty cross and the empty tomb are a cornerstone of our faith. The good news of our risen Lord is the foundation of the church today. As we journey through the final weeks of the Easter season and transition to Pentecost, it is clear that the story isn't over. God's promise for his people isn't complete on Easter. 19th century South African Minister Andrew Murray suggests, "The Spirit did everything on the Day of Pentecost and afterwards. It was the Spirit who gave the boldness, the wisdom, the message and the converting power". In John 14:16-17 Jesus tells his disciples "***And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him because he abides with you, and he will be in you.***" We rejoice in knowing that God entrusts us to build his kingdom after Jesus' resurrection and equips us to do so with the help of the Spirit. In our Pentecost story, the disciples are gifted the Holy Spirit after Christ's ascension. In Acts 2: 1-4 it states:

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on

each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

The disciples had been waiting for the Spirit to appear as Jesus commanded in Acts 1:4 before his ascension "***While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me." This event occurs on the Jewish festival of Pentecost. Why did God choose this moment to equip the church for ministry? According to Leonard Goffine, a late 17th century German Priest suggests:***

"Because on their Pentecost the Jews celebrated the anniversary of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, and God would show by sending the Holy Ghost on this day, that the Old Law had ceased and the New Law commenced. God also chose this time, that the Jews who on this day came together from all countries to Jerusalem to celebrate the Pentecost, might be witness of the miracle, and hear the New Law announced by the apostles." Most of the significant events in Jesus' ministry occurred during religious festivals so it makes sense for the Spirit to be introduced in the same way.

God has given us a gift beyond gifts in the Spirit, a reminder that we are not alone on this journey. Considering this, what significance does the story of Pentecost have for the modern

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Our Mission — To be a bridge to Christ through faith and service • Our Vision — When SPC is faithful in accomplishing its mission, people will know that Christ is at work in their lives and follow Him. • We Value — Being accepting, caring, outreaching, Spirit-led, and willing to serve

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



5/12 Lisa Lindsey
 5/22 Jerolene Crusenberry
 5/25 Calvin Piland
 5/30 Skip Irby
 5/30 Don White

† Doc Crusenberry
 † Eric Sterling
 † Jeffery Birkey
 † Richard Alan Goforth, Sr.
 † Skip Irby
 † Anton Johnston
 † Jimmy Hope
 † Pat Jones
 † Danny Morrow
 † Shelby Owen
 † Charlie Powell
 † Cindy Robinson
 † Jeff Snow
 † Randy Stoughton
 † Caroline

Happy Anniversary

5/12 Chris & Skip Irby

The *Suffolk Presbyterian Bridge* is a publication of Suffolk Presbyterian Church in Suffolk, VA.

The *Bridge* is published 12 times a year under the direction of the Administration/Communication Ministry Team of the SPC Session.

News items should be submitted to the newsletter editor in one of the following ways:

- email at office@suffolkpresbyterian.org
- mail to the church address
- Laura Farmer's office mailbox

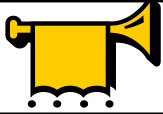
Editor: Laura Farmer,
 Administrative Assistant

PRAY FOR OUR

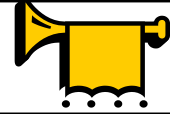
MILITARY

*Thank you for
 your service!*

† Ashlyn Dawson
 † Laura Dawson
 † Sidney Dawson
 † Nick Meadors
 † Glenn Smith
 † Hayden Spalding
 † Greg Vernon



News Briefs



Mark your calendars! Join us after worship on Sunday, May 19 for an ice cream social.

Suffolk Little Pantry: The youth are collecting items for their project. Granola bars, individual cracker packets, fruit cups, rice crispy treats, and other non-perishable snack items can be placed in the Narthex collection box.

Support humanitarian assistance in Israel/Palestine: The needs for the response will be great. God's people are called on to stand in the "GAP" — Give. Act. Pray. Gifts can be made [online](#), by calling (800) 872-3283, by texting PDAIP to 41444, or by check made payable to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with "DR000081-Israel/Palestine" on the memo line. Mail to: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.

Food Pantry Donations: The greatest needs are canned veggies/fruits/tuna/chicken, cold cereal, peanut butter, and jelly. Financial donations accepted via church website. Donations delivered to Suffolk Christian Fellowship Center.

Gift Card Ministry: The deacons are collecting \$25 restaurant gift cards during the offering to help congregation members in times of need. These will be used to assist with meals.

Administrative Office Hours



Laura Farmer's regular office hours are Wednesdays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, Thursdays from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm, and Fridays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. If you would like to contact her directly, please email office@suffolkpresbyterian.org or call 757-539-3213.

Directory Updates

If you have a new address, phone number, or email, please contact **Laura Farmer**, Administrative Assistant, at office@suffolkpresbyterian.org or 539-3213. If you are not in the directory, and would like to be added, please email your information. Thank you!

Presbyterian Women

Lydia Encounters Jesus in Worship

What does baptism mean to you? What is its significance today and how might it have changed since the beginning of the early church? How might Reform baptismal practices differ from other faith traditions? Come join us on Monday, May 13th at 7pm for Lesson Eight, “Lydia Encounters Jesus in Worship” from the Horizon’s Bible Study Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts. This lesson will include a DVD presentation by author Olive Mahabir followed by group discussion and will focus on the scripture of Acts 16:11-5 and highlight the following main idea:



Baptism connects us to God and the community of faith.

The evening will conclude with a monthly business meeting.

Everyone is welcome to attend. This will be the last gathering of the season. Meetings will resume in the fall using the study Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation, by Patricia K. Tull.

Day of Pentecost

On the Day of Pentecost we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit descending in a mighty rush of wind and flame to inspire the church’s proclamation of Christ’s rising and to empower its mission and ministry to the world. (See Acts 2:1-13; see also Joel 2:28-32.)

According to the Day of Pentecost story in Acts 2:1-13, God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to empower witnesses to the resurrection. Sounds from heaven, cosmic language, the rush of a mighty ruach (wind, spirit, breath) invaded the house in which the apostles gathered, and appeared to them as a burning fire. Tongues of fire touched their nerve centers. A power — the unseen power of God — moved among them and gripped them. The Holy Spirit is unseen, like the wind, which is why the Old Testament calls it ruach YHWH, “the wind, or breath, of God” (cf. John 3:8). The Spirit is the “unseenness of God” working among us.

According to Joel (2:28-29) the ruach is to open everybody to God’s future. People young and old will dream and will have visions of hope; they will be able to loose themselves from the way things are now, because God is establishing a whole new economy of creation. The Holy Spirit breaks us out of our preoccupation with ourselves and frees us to serve neighbors, loosens our grasp on possessions, and sets us to loving people. New creation is what Joel is talking about. Pentecost is new creation.

Therefore, on the Day of Pentecost, we celebrate God’s gift of Holy Spirit which draws us together as one people, helps us to comprehend what God is doing in the world, and empowers us to proclaim, in word and in deed, God’s plan of reconciling all people in the name of Christ (Ephesians 1:10).

Without the gift of the Spirit, Christ’s church dries up and withers away, and we are left with only our broken selves. With the gift of the Spirit, all things are possible. A spirit-filled community of faith opens eyes to needs in the world and sees its missing as God’s new people. The Day of Pentecost is the climax of the Great Fifty Days of Easter, celebrating as it does the gift of the Spirit to the body of Christ — the church.

Excerpts from: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/worship/christianyear/pentecost/>



Report from the Relocation Committee

For nearly 50 years, the members of Suffolk Presbyterian Church have borne fruit at 410 N. Broad Street. We've worshipped, studied, and shared fellowship together. We've served the community by providing meals, clothing, and shelter. We've grown food, held holiday events, and supplied clean water. Fed by the Holy Spirit, we've been productive in God's Suffolk vineyard.

But sometimes a vintner decides it is time to transplant a vine, finding a new location where the plant can flourish. Faced with a crumbling roof that has become uninsurable, leaks that led to mold, and an unreliable infrastructure, church elders decided it was necessary to find a new place for Suffolk Presbyterian to thrive. After exploring options, it was decided that we would remain a downtown church by leasing space in West End Baptist Church, located at 105 St. James Avenue. Each church will remain its own entity, with separate worship times and programming. SPC will create offices and special spaces on the second floor, share the choir room and nursery on the first floor, and occasionally hold events using the kitchen and social hall in the basement. There is an elevator which serves all three floors, designated handicapped parking and a ramp on the middle floor, and adequate infrastructure to permit improvements for technology. Most importantly, there is a friendly congregation excited to welcome us.

As we prepare for the move, the Relocation Committee and other church leaders have offered a series of events to celebrate SPC's past while looking towards the future. On April 7, a non-traditional service was held in the narthex centered around "I am the vine, you are the branches." A brown paper vine on the wall became covered with paper leaves and grapes as we named and celebrated the people and fruitful programs of our past. A branch was taken off and "transplanted" as we identified the members and programs that will continue and flourish in our new "vineyard". On April 21, we held a potluck lunch and Scavenger Hunt as members went room to room at SPC, identifying the "treasures" we will take with us, give away, or leave behind. Look for the results of these two events in the Narthex and add your thoughts.

In coming months, there will be additional opportunities for fellowship, reminiscing, and planning. The Deacons are preparing an ice cream social and an end-of-year picnic. The Relocation Committee is creating a survey to gather input from the congregation about worship and use of space preferences. And mark your calendars for Sunday, June 2, when we will have an open house at West End so SPC members can view the facilities available at our future address, 105 St. James Avenue.

Change is difficult, but God is at work in his garden. Remember the message Jeremiah delivered to the Hebrews: *"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."* We are branching out to a new vineyard. Rejoice and be fruitful!

Fellowship at SPC



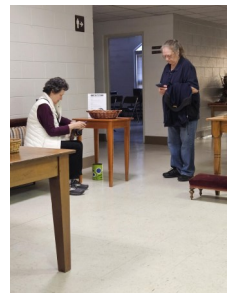
Mahler at the Sandler Center featuring Elisabeth Writtenberry



Easter Egg Hunt



Scavenger Hunt and Potluck



Good Friday Meditation

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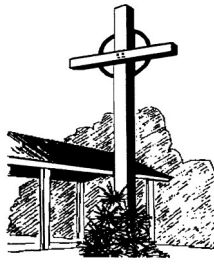
church? More importantly, what does it mean to have the Spirit guiding us in our daily work? In N. T. Write's book, "The Challenge of Easter" he states: "You are called to be truly human, but it is nothing short of the life of God within you that enables you to be so, to be remade in God's image." Write goes on to say "Your calling may be to find new ways to tell the story of redemption, to create fresh symbols that will speak of a home for the homeless, the end of exile, the replanting of the garden, the rebuilding of the house."

I invite you to consider how the Spirit is working in you and what you can do together in the name of God. What reassurance does the story of Pentecost give our congregation as we start on a new adventure?

May 2024

Suffolk Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<i>1</i>	<i>2</i> 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir	<i>3</i> 9 to 11 AM Plant Sale Pickup/Delivery	<i>4</i>
<i>5</i> <i>Communion Sunday</i> 9:45 AM Sunday School 10 AM Choir 11 AM Worship	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i> 7 pm Diaconate Meeting	<i>9</i> 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>12</i> 9:45 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir 11 AM Worship	<i>13</i> 7 pm Presbyterian Women	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i> 3 pm Session Meeting	<i>16</i> 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>19</i> 9:45 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir 11 AM Worship 12 PM Ice Cream Social	<i>20</i> 	<i>21</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i> 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>26</i> 9:45 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir 11 AM Worship	<i>27</i> Memorial Day	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i> 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir	<i>31</i>	



Suffolk Presbyterian Church
410 North Broad Street
Suffolk, Virginia 23434



Visit our website!
suffolkpresbyterian.org

Suffolk Presbyterian Church

Reverend Julie Sterling
Pastor

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SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:45 AM
CHOIR PRACTICE
10:30 AM
WORSHIP
11 AM

Upcoming Events:

May 8—Diaconate Meeting
May 13—Presbyterian Women
May 15—Session Meeting
May 19—Ice Cream Social

Thursdays—Spiritual Fellowship & Choir

Mark your calendars!
June 2—Open House at West End Baptist



Find us on Facebook
Search for *Suffolk Presbyterian
Church*